Fangs, and Other Stranger Things

Posted originally on the Archive of Our Own at http://archiveofourown.org/works/37409815.

Rating:	Teen And Up Audiences
Archive Warning:	Creator Chose Not To Use Archive Warnings
Category:	M/M
Fandom:	Hannibal (TV)
Relationship:	Will Graham/Hannibal Lecter
Characters:	Will Graham, Hannibal Lecter, Jack Crawford, Beverly Katz, Jimmy Price, Brian Zeller
Additional Tags:	Vampires, Werewolves, Hannibal's castle is in belarus, so it's set in belarus, please ask me why, Alternate Universe - Victorian, Victorian, Hannibal Lecter Loves Will Graham, Will Graham Loves Hannibal Lecter, but he's in denial, I would be too, Trans Male Character, Trans Character, cis!will is the real headcanon, Vampire Hannibal Lecter, Werewolf Will Graham, t4t, Trans 4 Trans, trans relationship, there's no transphobia though, just internalized stuff yknow
Language:	English
Stats:	Published: 2022-03-03 Updated: 2022-03-21 Words: 7,143 Chapters: 4/?

Fangs, and Other Stranger Things

by orphan_account

Summary

Will is recruited to investigate a series of murders that are appering closer to his small town by the day. The most recent suspect is Count Lector, a recluse who lives alone in a mighty castle. They both have secrets, but Hannibal is more willing to share.

Notes

first fic yayy *wild, sonorous applause* this is so self-indulgant honestly i'll probably butcher their characters SO hard

title from the Harley Poe song "Bloodsucker", which was a huge inspiration for this fic

I

Will heard all the rumors. He was a school teacher, albeit a reluctant one, and he heard every whisper. Most small towns thrived on gossip and secrets, but the one he lived in seemed to be built on fear. Their only contact to the outside world was the train that only came by once every blue moon. They lived in a bubble, for all intents and purposes.

Most of their fear was directed towards the shadowy castle, which towered above the flat plains surronding it. Everyone had their own theories of who or what lived there, each more preposterous than the last. Will didn't pay the rumors any attention. His disinterest in the castle was unusual, but he genuinely didn't see the point of speculating about a probably empty castle that had been quiet for as long as anyone could remember. He had bigger things to worry about, after all.

**

Will was dismissing his students and looking forward to heading home when Jack Crawford, their sheriff, walked in through the back. He made his presence known without a sound, standing with his feet planted until Will turned to face him.

He was tall because of his looming manner alone. His dark overcoat swept the floor, kicking up dust and dirt. If anything Will had heard about him was true, he was gruff and demanding with no known connections outside the police force. Will wasn't pleased to see him, but he forced a smile.

"Hello, Mr. Crawford. What can I do for you?" Will wanted to move to his desk, to pick up his papers, put his hands in his pockets or somthing, but he tried for a polite approach.

"You're Will Graham, yes?" Will nodded. "I need your help with an investagation."

Will tried to hide a frown, and asked, "Why do you need me?"

Jack set his jaw. He hadn't been expecting any questions, then. "We're running a bit short on officers is all. I've been corresponding with your old supervisior in Minsk, and he said you are a tremendous help."

Will's mood only dropped when Jack mentioned his past position, but he wasn't about to give up just yet. He decidedly moved towards his desk, and seeing Jack move away uncomfortably gave him a sense of smug satisfaction. Picking up the deck of cards he kept there and tapping them against his knuckles, he was reminded of the nights in Minsk when he would stay and play Bloody Knuckles with the other officers. They were constantly teasing and joking with each other, and it was easy to disarm them with a few glares. He didn’t mind losing, though, and secretly relished the feeling of broken skin. Coming back to the present he asked, “Is it urgent?"

"Do you think we normally ask schoolteachers for help? Yes, very." Jack turned towards the door, gesturing at Will as he went. Will made the same gesture towards his dogs sometimes,

and didn't appreciate the connection. Against his better judgement, he set down the cards and followed.

Dusk was just beginning to fall, tinging the sky a vibrant orange near the horizon. Jack’s eyes were immediately drawn to the castle while exiting the school, but Will paid it no attention. It was habit to ignore it.

The station wasn’t far, and no one greeted them on their way. Will guessed they did look pretty somber, walking around at dusk with closed expressions. Others might have felt obligated to break the silence with mindless chatter, but Will enjoyed silence, even if it only left him with his thoughts. Right now, he was wondering why Jack had come to the schoolhouse when he had, instead of waiting until Will was alone. At first, Will had figured he must have been exaggerating the urgency, but now he wasn’t so sure. It bothered him, not knowing.

He pulled at his shirt sub-consciously when they arrived, still somewhat uncomfortable with his chest. He knew no one would mention it in polite company, and wouldn’t lead to any suspicion. To distract himself, he took in the architecture of the building. This particular town was built during Lithuania’s control, and the style reflected that. It was much more beautiful than Minsk had been, and he didn’t even have to feign excitement when someone mentioned it to him.

Will was introduced to three other opratives. Their names left him a second after he heard them, and he tried to listen politely while Jack went on about their achivements. They looked as uncomfortable with the praise as he did, but let him talk. Clearly something they had to deal with a lot.

In terms of looks, none of them were particularly striking. The woman (Beverly, he could now recall) was pretty, but unremarkable. She leaned against a desk, a very open position, while she waited for Jack to finish. The pair behind her were more visibly anixous, tapping hands on wood and the like. They too were classically handsome but nothing to write home about. Will vaguely wondered if his instinct to objectify strangers stemmed from his own discomfort in his appearance. He couldn't be bothered to care.

Jack finished his lamenting, and Will tried his best to look like he had absorbed anything the man said.

"You'll be working together until we catch this guy, so I would get acquainted. Now, the case." He gestured them forward, to the pile of papers on a nearby desk. Pulling the map forward and gesturing at various locations, he contiuned. "We've found five bodies in a spiral around town, the oldest found the farthest out and the newest being closer. The bodies are mangled beyond identification, but we've linked disapperences in the area to four of the bodies."

Will could physcially feel his mind growing more interested. This he understood. He knew how to approach this type of case. He ached to be out in the field, to see the bodies where the killer had laid them to rest, to truely understand the intricacies of their mind. It had been so long since he had delved into a murderer's mind, and as much as he hated to admit it, he missed the searing pain that came with it.

Jack turned, and Will realized he had tuned out the last half of his explaining. He was only a little guilty. Apperently, somewhere in Jack's stream of dialogue he had dismissed the others, leaving just him and Will alone. Their presences' would have been appreciated, as he didn't like being around Jack alone, but he could managed. He mimicked Jack's posture, drawing his shoulders up and setting his feet apart, radiating a confidence he didn't feel.

"I wanted to talk to you about something, Will. Just for a minute," Jack said, a kind undertone to his voice Will knew was there to soften disappointment. "We don't have it in the budget to pay you, so you'll be consulting unoffically. When we catch this guy, you'll obviously get the credit, but I just thought you'd like to know."

He'd like to know what? That he was giving away his time (and his mind) for nothing? "It's fine."

Jack blinked. He'd been expecting an arguement, then. "Are you sure?"

Will was never sure of anything. "I get it."

Jack clapped him on the shoulder, and it was all Will could do to not wrench his arm out of Jack's grasp. He meant it as a friendly gesture, but the weight and grip made his breath rattle against his ribs. "Good man. I knew I could count on you."

Will nodded slowly, and wished so hard it hurt that Jack would let him leave already. For once sensing Will's discomfort, Jack gestured to the door and turned back to his papers. Will practically flew out the door, the need to be somewhere safe and away a constant companion on his walk home.

His house was only a mile outside the town's unoffical boundary, but with the low light and quiet suffocating him, it felt much longer. Normally he would admire the foliage, and search through the bushes for anything he could use for lures, but not now. He walked as fast as he could without it being considered running, fingers tight around his things. Every shadow in the woods was the mystery killer coming to rip his neck.

He could have cried when he reached home, the ramshackle building never looking more beautiful in his eyes. His dogs in the yard, upon hearing his return, all turned their heads upward and howled.

Probably because they weren't traditional dogs.

They were wolves.

II

Chapter Notes

> oh btw vampires work like the ones in hotel transylvania, now question why youre reading this asswipe of a fic
>
> also i made jack not an asshole just for you bae <3

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Will was not a morning person. Nothing short of being physically dragged out of bed could get him up before noon on days he wasn't teaching. He valued his privacy, which is why he had picked such a remote place to live. The forest was never quiet, but it was soothing in it's cacophony.

It was just his luck to have someone pounding on his door at the crack of dawn. He let his head flop down after one defeated look at the door, and didn't lift it again until the uproar was deafening. The morning light caught his scars when he pulled a shirt over his head, white and proud. The thin, smiling ones that wrapped around his upper ribs were a mixure of satisfaction and unease to Will. Knowing that no one would be able to identify them did nothing to comfort the general nervousness surronding them. People were more likely to comment on the jagged claw marks down his arms, or the puckered bullet hole in his shoulder.

Realizing he'd been staring into the cracked mirror above his bed for the better part of a minute, he turned back to the door. The knocking hadn't let up, and his wolves were starting to get restless. They were good boys, for the most part, and knew not to bark at company. But like they could sense his agitation, they were starting to circle the door, teeth bared and growling. The kind of growls that start in the back of one wolf's throat, and end up lodged deep in back of another's.

"Down, boys. Get back," Will said as he went to open the door, pushing the apex predators away as easily as one might swat a fly. They compromised to sitting at his heels. He was expecting Jack when he opened the door, and was proven right immediately.

Even in the dim light, he was an imposing sight. The sun that was just rising over the hills gave him an dramatic back-light, and he barely looked phased to see wolves grouped around his investigator's feet.

"Morning, Will. Ready to get to work?" Will rubbed a hand over his face in an attempt to wipe away his obvious fatigue.

Hoping his voice didn't sound dreary, he said, "I guess. Are we going to look over the bodies?" Jack nodded, and gestured for Will to follow him back to the town. Will hung back

for a moment before saying, "I'll get dressed and meet you there."

Jack frowned, but Will shut the door before he could offer a rebutal. Turning back inside, Will quickly gathered up the clothes least covered in wolf hair from the ground and glared at the small sheet of paper nailed beside his mirror. Small red dots counted the days, to what an outsider wouldn't know. But Will glared at the paper as if had personally offended him, assorted curses threatening to spill from his tongue. He finished pulling on his coat, and shuffled the wolves out of the way to leave.

"We're going out tonight, guys," He said, fake enthusiasm tainting his voice. The wolves, not knowing the difference, jumped happily at his feet, scratching his pants and generally being rambunctious. He could only pet their heads, and slowly push them away from the door.

Dread settled in his chest, heavy and hurting, once he closed the door. The woods were no longer a place of comfort now, knowing how he'd violate them later. He saw no wildlife on his walk into town, as if every creature knew what atrocities he'd be commiting soon.

It was still early morning when the dirt faded into jumbled brick, but he saw quite a few people walking around, taking no more time than necessary to get where they had to go. Evidently, the gloomy castle still had control of the town. People were more catious at dusk and dawn, like they thought sharks would descend and rip them to shreds. No one looked at him when they walked by, and Will paid them no heed.

Everyone in the station looked just as tired as Will, clutching cups to their chests and gazing absently at Jack. Beverly offered Will a cup with a smile before moving to stand between Price and Zeller, the two men Will had been introduced to yesterday. Other than that, the room was filled with stoic strangers. It was less people than Will was expecting from the police force, but that wasn't exactly any of his business. It was his business, however, that everyone seemed to be glaring at him with barely concealed contempt. A ripple of panic struck him, and he trained his eyes on what ever murky liquid was at the bottom of his cup (he didn't remember drinking any.) He hadn't said a word yet, but these people didn't need a reason to hate him, apparently.

"Today we'll work in two teams. One team will return to the murder sites and look for anymore clues they can find," Jack looked meaningfully at Will as he spoke, then turned away, "and one will be conducting investagations around town. Anything strange, anyone new, whatever you can find. You will report back to me immediatly if you find anything of interest."

Everyone started talking at once when Jack finished, and Will gravitated to Beverly's side to his own suprise.

"You're the new guy, right?" Beverly forwent any greetings or pleasantries, and Will felt a grudge of respect for her.

"We met yesterday, I was..." Will briefly fumbled for the right word for his situation, "recruited by Jack the same day."

Price and Zeller exchanged nods, and stuck out their hands for his to shake. He did so lightly, with as little contact as possible. "We haven't seen you around. You new in town?"

Will shrugged, and swallowed the rest of the liquid in his cup to give his mouth something to do. "Relatively, yeah. I live a few miles outside town, and I moved here five months ago."

"You settling in okay?" Beverly asked, before Jack asked for quiet again.

Will was suprised, but not displeased, to learn that Beverly, Price, and Zeller would all be with him to examine the bodies. He assumed Jack had seen them together and though they were acquainted, but he wasn't complaining either way. They walked through the woods that weren't his, the ones just on the border of town that had been thinned out years ago. Considering they were walking to a crime scene, the mood was generally uplifting, and he felt like he was among friends for the first time in a long time. But of course, good things couldn't last forever, and the castle came up in conversation.

"I remember someone in Voranava swear on his life that he'd met the man who lived there," Price said proudly, "He said he's quite the looker."

Beverly squealed, and Will tried to space out just enough to still be aware of his feet without hearing a thing.

"Are you kidding? He's locked up in there because a past lover mangled his face beyond recognition, and was cast out," Zeller scoffed. Price waved him away. "What about you, Will? What do you think lives up there?"

Will gazed up at the castle, at the right angle and close enough to see the stain glass windows on the side illuminated. They were shades and shards of red, and Will imagined the inside must look like the inside a body, all dripping blood and shredded intestines. Anyone on the inside would look unearthly shaded in the copper tones. The light coming in shining a reverse halo of death and-

"I don't know, it's probably empty," Will said shortly, pulling his thoughts back inside his head where they belonged, "I mean, it's been quiet for years. No one could possibly be alive in there."

The others looked disappointed, but returned to their own conversations. Will was grateful for the absence of scrutiny, but dispirted to have already disappointed his new friends.

They arrived at the scene without any more conflict, and Will realized just how bad the situation.

For one thing, the body was a police officer's, but the shining badge was the only identifiable part of the body. The head had been almost completely torn off, a gaping hole in the neck that was oddly pale. The chest was pulled open down the center to reveal pink lungs and a small heart. Price stumbled into the woods to be sick.

When Will looked closer, the scene only got stranger. The blood vessels in the man's neck were dry, leaving no color in the face. Will thought this was recent kill, but the discoloration

indicated possibly years dead. And when he examined the split chest (holding his nose as he did), multiple organs were missing.

"Wait, this isn't our badge," Beverly muttered. She was gripping the bloodied metal in one hand, looking almost as pale as the corpse. She the first to break the silence they had unanimously agreed on when they entered the clearing. Will rose to see what she was talking about, and she turned to show him the badge.

"What do you mean? Look, it says *palicyja*," Will said, gesturing to the lettering in the middle. Beverly shook her head, and pointed more firmly to the characters surronding it.

"Yes, it's a police badge, but it's at least fourty years old. These were last issued before my dad was in the force," she spoke, frowning and furrowing her brow, "But that's impossible, Jack said this body was found three days ago. There's no way we missed this for four decades."

"It's impossibly well preserved, if so," Price said, having returned from his vomit session and now examining the fingers and eyes, "The animals would have torn him to shreds, but his fingernails are actually buffed." Zeller whistled in appreciation.

Will could almost hear Jack telling him to do his thing. If he had been in correspondence with his handler in Minsk, there was no way he didn't know about Will's... special talent. And Will wanted to, but for all the wrong reasons. When he was in the force, he had to do it to save lives and catch killers, but he always stayed too long in the mind of the killers. They'd overstay their welcome, digging below the surface like maggots until he couldn't tell his thoughts apart from the killers anymore. It left him thinking of how different they actually were, and if things had turned out a little different, how he would have ended up.

But here was a dead body and a great mystery, and no real reason to not do it (beside the obvious, of course.)

"Could I be alone with the body for a minute?" He asked no one in particular. The others exchanged looks that Will purposefully tried not to read, then turned back to him.

"Of course, if it'll help," Price supplied, and they started the long trudge back to town without him. Will immediately felt their absence, and the wind was too loud in his ears now. He took some deep breaths to soothe his fast-beating heart, but his hands still shook at his sides. He clenched them into fists and ground them into his eyes, and when he pulled them away he was killing the police officer.

His mouth was stuck deep in the man's, no, the pig's throat. It tried to stumble away across the grass, but it only succeeded in tearing more flesh off its' neck. Will's hands were holding tight to its' waist as he bit down, the sweet, coppery taste of blood spreading through his mouth. Jerking his hand back, and letting the lifeless body fall to the ground, he began to talk.

"I bite the man on his neck, tearing out a chunk of it with my teeth. It's his own fault for trying to follow me home, and I'm making sure it'll be his last." Will briefly closed his eyes, trying to ground himself, before saying, "This is my design."

In a second, he was on top of the body. Kicking it to it's back, sharp fingernails tearing at the hole in the pig's neck. Will felt down the chest before he found the middle, and with both hands, *ripped* the pig's skin open. In the back of his mind, Will gasped with desire. The power this killer had was overwhelming and all consuming. Will never wanted to leave.

Then he blinked, and it was gone. He stood alone in the woods with tears streaking down his face, and no one could hear him scream.

Chapter End Notes

please i havent even introduced handinballs yet im so sorry (crying emoji)

III

Chapter Summary

gay Men

Will returned to the station just as the sun began to crest the horizon. He delivered his report in a dead voice, and ignored the concerned look Beverly gave him. His friends were curious about what happened after they left, clearly, but one look in his dull eyes warned them away.

When he returned to his home, his inner demon was already threatening to emerge. The feeling pricked at his skin like needles did. It went deeper, though, and it felt like his organs were being constricted. All his clothes felt too hot for his skin, but with nothing on, the stale air felt impossibly cold. He knew it was just his body getting ready to change, but the feeling never got better, no matter how many months he had to endure it.

His wolves were restless. Animals could always sense it before him, and that was one of the reasons he kept them around. If he forgot to count the days, or the moon came too early, they could tell him before the time came. For now, they were pacing the floor, mirroring his own thoughtless actions. Once he started to change, they would start to howl.

While he paced on bare feet, even with the threat of his change happening soon, his thoughts still strayed to the murder he had witnessed (and renacted in his mind.) He struggled to find the words to describe it without sounding completely out of his mind. Any sane person wouldn't say such a terrible crime was dominating, devouring, or obsessive. But he would. Maybe it wasn't him, maybe he was having trouble seperating himself and the killer again. It wouldn't have been the first time.

The feeling was more aggressive now, borderline painful. He knew it was going to emerge soon, and there was no point delaying the inevitable, but he lingered inside. He checked his reflection in the mirror, and grabbed his dirtiest clothes, knowing they would be torn to shreds before the night was done. The wolves, not giving a shit about his reluctance, gathered by the back door and scratched restlessly at his pants.

"Alright, alright, we're going, calm down," Will said, scratching at the heads closest to him and opening the door. They spilled onto the grass, running in circles and impatiently huffing at him.

The fact that they were impatient was impossibly funny to Will, and he let out an unbalanced laugh. It rang in his ears, and echoed in the trees.

He could see the moon now, peeking above the trees and blood red. He ran a hand through his hair, gripping his curls to try and stay human for as long as he could. The sensation was

fairly grounding, and he glared at the moon, daring it to try and change him.

Of course, the moon wasn't the exact reason he changed. He was a vilkacis of sorts, but some cruel trick of fate meant he had to turn, at least once a month. He learned that if he didn't change before the month was up, the wolf would take control of him and ravage those close to him. It could have been some sick reflection of his inner demons and how he was prone to short, but destructive, bursts of violence, but he didn't want to think about that. He just didn't.

But his month was up. Not wasted, but unfulfilling. He was on the verge of changing now, he only had to close his eyes and let go of his humanity, and the wolf surfaced from his skin. Blinding pain, so violent Will didn't supress the urge to fall to his knees in the grass, and then it was over.

The wolves around him growled as he opened his eyes, blue and clear and piercing. He could hear every sound now, the crickets in the grass, the birds miles away, with fluffy ears he flattened against his disgusting, violating head. His hands felt wrong, but so familiar. The rough pads could accutely feel every blade of grass, and his claws jutted out slightly, a shining silver against the dark brown of his fur. The moon was no longer a stranger, a glaring orange surronded by a scattering of stars. Will thought he could cry.

But he needed blood before the night was up. With a single bark to his pack, they disappered into the trees.

**

Will didn't wake up in his bed after the night of hunting. That wasn't unheard of. What was strange was that this was someone else's bed.

The sheets were satin, like the expensive dress he had seen in a shop window. It was impossibly soft and sleek, probably a one thousand count weave. They were also a dark red. He thought vaguely that he could be lying in a pool of blood, with the way the sheets caught the light and lit up like rubies. The light itself was coming in from the very top of the large windows, and he guessed it was noon. The windows themselves were brillant works of art, stain glass panels that looked to be thrown together haphazardly with no thought to design. With their blue shades, it could be a night sky, or an vast sea. He was practically drowning just looking at it.

He should have been a bit more freaked out about being in a complete stranger's home, in their bed and very nice sheets. He figured if they went to the trouble of rescuing him from whatever dirt pile he had inevitably fallen asleep in and taken him here, they probably weren't going to hurt him now. Unless they were waiting until he was awake, so they could get some weird kick out of killing someone alive. God, why did his mind have to go there? They were probably fine, whoever his odd savior was.

Will kicked off the sheets, feeling slightly guilty as he did, then looked down. A wave of nausa attacked him, and he was briefly wracked with pain. They had taken his shirt.

With a quick glance around, he could see that they hadn't just removed it for his comfort. They had taken it off and fucking took it. This just got better and better. Not only were his

scars on full display, it was March in Eastern Europe. He was cold, for crying out loud.

A brief fantasy overtook him, one where he laid in the admittedly warm bed until the host (?) came to see if he was awake, but he really wanted to find his shirt (and have a little talk with whoever the fuck thought it was a good idea to undress him while he was sleeping.)

So he sighed, and stepped down onto the freezing wood floor. The wood was dark and stripped, and Will was really wondering what architect thought this was a good idea. He felt like a murderer was going to jump out of the closet any minute. He did see some socks laid out on a nearby dresser, and he pulled them on before walking to the door.

The hallway seemed to fit the same creepy, gothic theme. It was dimmly lit, too, evidently the only light coming from windows in rooms. Will was reluctant to close the door, and the gloom only intensifed when he did. He took a shakey breath, silently chided himself for being so scared. Of all the crime scenes he had been to, none of the murders had been commited in dark, creepy hallways.

But he heard a sound behind him, and his soul left his body. Before he could turn, he felt a hand on his shoulder. Not cold exactly, but not very comforting in his current state. He yelped and spun on his heels, almost falling over in the process. His chest was shaking, his heart trying its best to beat its way out of its cavity.

"Apologies, I didn't mean to scare you. I just wanted to see if you were awake." The speaker was a man, tall and broadshouldered. Blond, with deep set eyes. Will looked at him, and knew that he wore suits tailored to minimaze his body, and he could play his hand at any type of social interaction using only half his intellect, and that he never looked at anyone the way he was looking at Will now. Like he needed to know every secret so he could properly destroy him completely, and leave him wanting more. Will decided then he didn't like him.

"I am now. Just- give a man some warning next time, Jesus," Will said, speech still slurred from his sleep. He didn't care that he sounded rude, or was crossing his arms over his chest in a way that could only be precived as defensive. He just wanted his shirt so he could leave.

The other man's eyes crinkled at the edges in way Will knew was deliberatly warm. "Of course." He held out a shirt, Will's shirt, and when Will grabbed it from him he frowned.

"Did you... wash my shirt?" Will held it up to the minimal light avaliable, and scowled. There was signifigantly less dirt on it than when he had worn it. "Oh my God, you washed my shirt. Do you understand how weird that is? Are you some sort of perv?"

His eyes crinkled again, but paired with his perfect Cupid's bow lips upturning. Will didn't want to overanalyze every expression this man had to offer, so he just stayed silent and fuming until he answered.

"Yes, I did. I apologize if that makes me 'some sort of perv' in your eyes. If it makes you feel better, I have the same scars," he said, and gestured to Will's chest, which felt signifigantly lighter. He felt his own tension dissipating, and he smiled genuinely at the other man, the other trans man.

"That does make me feel better. Thanks," Will rubbed his neck, and kept his eyes trained on the stones behind the other man's head. His train of thought stopped abrubtly, and he said, "What's your name?"

"Hannibal."

"Will," he said. The other man- Hannibal- hadn't asked his name but he thought it would be polite to offer it, especially considering how rude he'd been just a few minutes ago. He hadn't quite forgiven him for removing his shirt in his sleep, but he could get there. Probably.

Will thought he say Hannibal's eyes glow when he offered his name, but it was probably a trick of the dim light.

"Anyway," Will said, a bit too loudly, "Thank you for, uh, rescuing me from the forest. Actually, where did you find me?"

Another smile, this time with barely concealed mirth. Probably well concealed around polite company, but Will was everything but. "Nowhere special."

That tells me jackshit."Oh, okay." He paused, and tried to think of something to say that wasn't *what does that even mean?*

"If you'll stay for lunch, I have some cepelinai cooking." It was the way Hannibal said it that told Will he had to stay. It was unnerving, to say the least.

Instead of answering, Will asked, "What time is it?" and pulled his shirt back over his head while Hannibal checked his watch. Will decidedly ignored the flash of loss in Hannibal's eyes. If he kept overanalyzing every expression Hannibal had to offer, they'd be here all day.

"Almost twelve," Hannibal said, and Will mentally congratulated himself on being able to judge time based on the sun. It was pretty useless, sure, but it gave him a bit of confidence when he was sorely lacking. Especially standing next to a well-dressed, polite man in a thread-bare shirt and no shoes. They could have this conversation on a street corner in Minsk, with himself as a beggar, and he wouldn't notice a difference.

Hannibal noticed his shaking, though, and gestured to an open doorway. "I have a fire going, if you wish."

If I wish what? That you'd shut up and just let me leave already? Will followed him down a grand staircase and vaguely wondered how big this house was. It could probably fit a few of his inside, just judging on the bedroom and the foyer they now stepped into.

There was, in fact, a fire going. Will sat down on the floor, ignoring the waiting chairs to settle on the expensive rug. If he closed his eyes just right, he could imagine that his wolves were all around him, settled on this rug in front of a fire. This could be any cold morning.

But Hannibal sat next to him, and the illusion was shattered. Will didn't feel the need to start any conversation or tell Hannibal his cepelinai was probably burning. The extra heat was nice, he guessed, and he could finally start to feel his fingers again.

He risked a glance at Hannibal, who was looking expectantly right back at him. Christ, had he been watching him the whole time? The more time he spent in Hannibal's presence, the more he doubted his past assumptions. Hannibal wasn't trying to be imposing, or act smaller than he was. He simply existed, and the rest of the world had to deal with it. He could obviously sway any unwitting soul with a few words if his smoky accent and simple closeness said anything about him.

But he seemed… lonely. Not that he couldn't host glorious dinner parties that would be the talk of the town or that he couldn't have any lover he wanted. Will knew now every interaction he had was bare, simply giving the appropriate responses to his partner, who thought they were having an intimate conversation. Will wondered what he was like in bed.

Then Will wondered, horrified, why the FUCK that was one of the thoughts to come into his head. Hannibal had saved him, in a manner of speaking, and objectifying him was wrong on so many levels, so many Will closed his eyes again and tried to not think of anything at all.

"Comfortable, Will?" But there is was again, the real curiousness lurking below the surface. Will felt as if he was being asked that by an old friend, rather than someone he had barely had a conversation with. Will wondered if Hannibal could read him as easily as he could read him.

"Yeah," Will replied, a non-committal response he hoped would lead to more silence. Hannibal smiled, and like he could read his mind, stood and walked to where Will assumed the kitchen was. Will settled again, slightly lacking from Hannibal's warmth at his side, with his arms around his knees, which were drawn up under his chin. His hands absently went to pick leaves out of his hair, as he had to every morning after a hunt, but there were none to be found. He ruffled his hair, fingers twisting around every curl in a desperate search for filth that simply wasn't there.

Had Hannibal washed him too? It sent a jolt of panic through him, though not as pronounced as it had been when he learned Hannibal had taken his shirt.

Will had learned to let himself have what he wanted in his head, as the real world was so unforgiving. But this was too far. It was just a ridiculous idea. His wolves had probably cleaned him when he had fallen asleep and been scared away when Hannibal found him. Hannibal had not washed him.

Will groaned and buried his face in his hands. Why couldn't he have been saved by some impersonal man, who shooed the weird vermin out of the house the second he woke? Things would have been so much easier. Now he was having sick fantasies about some striking, mysterious man he had just met, who couldn't give a shit about the dirty street rat that was Will Graham. He had been informed by friends, family, and lovers in the past that he did not clean up well.

He wanted to bolt at that moment, and the door was so near, but Hannibal came back to inform Will lunch was ready, and he really should stay. Any and all of Will's arguments

disappeared in a second, and he followed Hannibal to the dining room, mentally tracking mud all over the floor.

IV

Chapter Notes

> this one went completely off the rails, theyre both kinda horny but like just for murder stuff :thumbsup: just go with it lololol

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Lunch was a quiet affair. The food was good, great even, much more than what Will was expecting. With a house like this, Will had expected maids and cooking staff, but Hannibal took charge of the kitchen. Will watched him while he ate, mindlessly spooning cepelinai into his mouth. The other man moved like birds do in the air, a sort of dance with wide, unhurried motions and smaller movements that Will would miss if he blinked. It was beautiful in a way, and Will thought he could watch all day. But he soon reached the bottom of his bowl, and the dull scrape of his spoon somehow reached Hannibal's ears.

"Did you enjoy it?" Will wasn't sure if he meant the food or the performance. He handed over his bowl and stretched his arms over his head.

"Very much, thank you," he said, more than surprised at his manners. "Did you make some for yourself?"

Hannibal shook his head, so gently Will thought he mistook the movement. "I don't eat during the day."

Hannibal turned away and left Will with knuckles whitening on the chair in front of him. What did that mean? He couldn't think of any possible explanation, and he didn't like not knowing. Hannibal wasn't the easiest person to read, but now he seemed intentionally closed and puzzling.

"I should probably go. Thank you for the food and everything." It seemed like quite the rushed appreciation, even to Will's ears, but the walls were starting to close in on him. One sentence that Will could easily be misinterpreting and he was already getting cagey.

With a gesture, Hannibal led Will back down the hall and towards the door. Will stood with his back to the fire, feeling a bit remorseful that he'd be leaving this warm house for the chill waiting for him outside the door.

"I hope I see you again soon, Will." Hannibal didn't move to open the door. His posture was radiating the most hostile mood Will had seen yet. But his words were polite, his stupid attractive accent sweetening them like honey. Will sensed he was waiting for something, but what Will couldn't guess.

"Where did you find me, Hannibal?" Using Hannibal's name gave him an unreasonable sense of power, even if it did little to settle his stomach.

"I found a monster in the woods." Will's heart simultaneously tried to climb up his throat and stop beating. "It was the darkest hour of the night, and it was feasting. A pack of wolves surrounded it, but none were as magnificent as it was. It was easily as tall as a man, and I watched it tear a figure limb from limb. I'd never seen such an exquisite creature, and I waited until it went to sleep, but when it did, it turned into you." Hannibal's mouth curled, unnaturally cruel. "A prince in a bed of thorns, with lips covered in blood."

Will touched his lips impulsively and watched as Hannibal's darkened eyes tracked the movement.

"I brought you here, I cleaned you. But I wished for you to turn again and attack me, to see how I would fare against such strength." Will's eyes were trained hard to the floor now, and his heels hit the wall. When had he started to back away? "I found you, Will, demon and all."

"I wish you didn't." Will hated how weak his voice sounded as if it was betraying the falsehood in his words.

"You wish for a lot of things, Will, but my knowing your secret is not the worst that has happened. We both know the life you took in the woods was not that of an animal. You killed a man and looked gorgeous doing it."

"You can't just say things like that!" Will's voice rang in the hall, desperation thick in his tone. Desperate for Hannibal to stop, desperate to leave, but craving more of his godless words. "Just let me leave, please."

The please was pathetic, but so was Will. Escape was so close, and he needed to leave now more than ever. The fact that Hannibal knew was slowing building in his brain, the words *he knows* a mantra pounding in his head.

"I won't tell." But there it was again, the clever sweetness infused in his tone. It was complete bullshit, to be sure, and Will was not ready to believe it.

"Open the door, just stop," he said, and pushed hard against Hannibal's chest. It didn't do much (he would've done better pushing against solid stone), but Hannibal blinked and the moment was gone. He backed away, a steady distance from Will. He clasped his hands together and seemed to be grinding his teeth together.

"My apologies." Will thought that didn't make up for anything that Hannibal had said, and considered telling him so, but nodded curtly instead. "I lost myself. It's no excuse."

Will ran his fingers through his hair, needing to scratchy feeling against his hand to keep him from screaming. "Can I go now?"

"If you must," Hannibal didn't even have the decency to sound embarrassed, simply opening the heavy door for Will and moving back into the shadows before saying, "But I do hope I see you again, *mio piccolo angelo*."

Chapter End Notes

SORRY ITS SO SHORT MY BRAIN IS LEAKING OUT OF MY EARS!!!! :)))))

why does handinballs know italian uh good question i just saw the pet name in a good omens fic and i was like this. this one. i like it.

Please drop by the Archive and comment to let the creator know if you enjoyed their work!